

NewsRelease

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Kathy Barnstorff
Langley Research Center, Hampton, Va.
(Office: 757/864-9886/Cellular: 757/344-8511)

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Fred Johnsen
Dryden Flight Research Center,
(Office: 661/276-2998)

Megan Clark or Kim Hinson
Virginia Air & Space Center
(Office: 757 727-0900/ext. 730 or 731)

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AIR & SPACE CENTER TO DEDICATE NASA F-18 RESEARCH JET

A former NASA research aircraft used to improve the safety and maneuverability of modern military fighters in combat situations will now make its home in a Virginia aviation museum.

The F-18 HARV or High Alpha Research Vehicle has been moved into its permanent location within the Virginia Air & Space Center in Hampton, Va.

Media are invited to the official dedication ceremony of the aircraft at the Virginia Air & Space Center at 600 Settler's Landing Rd. on Tuesday, June 10 at 11:30 a.m. Interviews with researchers who worked with the jet and a video news release of the F-18 HARV in flight will be available.

The F-18 HARV is on loan from NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. It is one of several aircraft the Virginia Air & Space Center will feature as part of its new Adventures in Flight Gallery, scheduled for take-off in October.

NASA researchers, including many from NASA's Langley Research Center also in Hampton, used the former fighter jet prototype between 1987 and 1996 to study airflow, aircraft control, and engine performance at high angles of attack, the very extreme flight attitudes planes get to in air combat situations.

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Flight research with the HARV increased our understanding of flight at high angles of attack. That understanding has helped makers of U.S fighter jets design features that will make fighter jets safer to fly, especially in parts of the flight envelope pilots previously had to avoid.

During the second phase of flight research with the F-18 HARV, NASA researchers installed a thrust-vectoring system at the end of the engine's exhaust at the back of the airplane. The spoon-shaped paddles can be moved to direct engine exhaust flow to provide much greater pitch and yaw control. This enhanced maneuverability and control. As a result, a thrust vectoring system is now included on the country's newest jet fighter, the F-22.

The F-18 HARV flew more than 385 research flights over its nine years in use at Dryden.

The Virginia Air & Space Center is the visitor center for NASA Langley Research Center and Langley Air Force Base.

For more information on NASA's Langley Research Center, please check the Internet at:

<http://www.larc.nasa.gov>

For more information on NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center, please check the Internet at:

<http://www.dfrc.nasa.gov>

For more information on The Virginia Air & Space Center, please check the Internet at:

<http://www.vasc.org>

Flight test photographs are available on the Internet at:

<http://www.dfrc.nasa.gov/Gallery/Photo/F-18HARV/index.html>